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Frederic Aouad
980, De Maisonneuve W, Montreal, QC, H3A 1M5 514-843-3000 / 1-877-843-3003 info.mtl@lestmartin.com www.lestmartinmontreal.com

The year of the Grinch

by Lyle Stewart

Alcohol and substance abuse counsellors sometimes say a person has to hit rock bottom before they can start climbing out of the nightmare of their addiction. For political junkies in Canada, this past year had to mark a new low of degradation.

After 2013, the most famous Canadian in the world is now the crack-smoking moron who just happens to be the mayor of Toronto. Sweaty, violent and obscene, Rob Ford cannot open his mouth without a vomiting up a chunky witch's brew of lies, hatred and self-pity. It's telling that he still has a decent chance of re-election from his impenetrable support base that cheers on Ford's every cringe-inducing embarrassment.

The only saving grace is that it's Toronto. What? Oh right. Montreal also elected a flabby fool with foot-in-mouth disease this fall, one who had his snout deep in the Liberal sponsorship scandal a decade ago. How soon we forget. At the very least, we hope, Denis Coderre will stay off the crack pipe – a small mercy after the year's revelations of a municipal corruption cancer that infected every last cell of Montreal's body politic.

After showing promise of progressive change in the initial weeks of her government elected last year, in 2013 Quebec Premier Pauline Marois opened Pandora's box in a bid to consolidate political power. By introducing the human-rights horror of the so-called Quebec Charter of Values, she threw a trainload of explosive tar-sands oil on the smouldering embers of racial hatred in Quebec, with predictable results. The most vulnerable of visible minorities in our society are now fair game in a toxic explosion of verbal and physical assault, and this with the full moral support of the Quebec government.

Saving the worst for last, Prime Minister Stephen Harper this year shed any pretence that the public good has any role to play in his governance. Having corrupted the Senate, used federal intelligence agencies to spy on Canadians for the benefit of foreign corporations, killed environmental protections, trampled our fundamental democratic rights and repeatedly lying about all of the preceding – even though he knew we knew he was lying – it's hard to imagine it can get any worse at any level of government in Canada.

There is no shame anymore on the part of this smug gang of gloating Grinches. The most casual of political observers can't help but wonder at the head-spinning contempt.

The case of James Moore, one of Harper's senior ministers after nine years in government, is revealing. A week before Christmas, the season of giving and of remembering Jesus Christ's command to be our brother's keeper, Moore snidely expresses the true soul of Canada's Conservatives with a comment about child poverty that will henceforth define his political career: "Why should I feed my neighbour's children?"

This has to be rock bottom. It is time for Canadians to take a long, hard look in the mirror and seek help to escape the deadly addiction to the politics of selfishness. We can only hope that 2014 will see our first steps on the difficult but necessary road to recovery.

Contents

editorial
- The year of the Grinch 3

rez notes
- A caribou Christmas for all! 4

news
- The world mourns Nelson Mandela 5
- Home-grown power 7

features
- Cree leaders talk about 2013 and 2014 10
- Diamonds in the sky 22
- Cree hockey and broomball tourney 25
- Strateco's latest ploy 27
- Bridging cultural chasms 29
- Celebrating Sam Bosum 30
- cree@large 31

UTNS
- Merry Christmas Mother Earth 33

photo by:
Neil Diamond

A caribou Christmas for all!

by Joshua Iserhoff

Greetings from sunny Val d'Or or as we call it, Sin City! Though I think there's less sinning during the wintertime – no? I had a good night's rest there at the Quality Inn and Suites (they have the most comfortable beds in town). However, the neon lights across the street at Hotel L'Escale almost had me rush over to sing a couple of songs with our dear friend Alain. He is the best DJ/entertainer there is and Laura Kitchen would agree with me 100%. Alas, I opted for my comfy bed.

I celebrate this moment with you because it is my 36th birthday. Some may argue that I am not a youth anymore, well let me just say that I am forever young – thanks to Rod Stewart for the great song. I've taken that song to heart. I think the joie de vivre is the key to looking young and fresh. Drinking tons of water, eating right and a couple of injections of Botox also helps. If you're a Cree and had Botox done please get in touch with me I'd like to meet and befriend you. Oh the vanity!

It's December and dubbed the most wonderful time of the year. I agree. I love the cheer and the festive mood that everyone's in. Even the caribou are prancing around the James Bay Highway and Route du Nord. I have a feeling there will be tons of take-out plates of moose stew in the coming weeks.

I'm reminded of a story years back of a friend who bought caribou meat from an unknown hunter. It was one of those "Ding-dong" Yes? "Wanna buy caribou meat?" sales stories. The seller asked if he could leave the caribou in the shed and my friend agreed. Later that evening she wanted a slab of meat to cook for her mother. She walked into the shed and was jolted – the caribou wasn't cut, wasn't skinned, its eyes wide open, frozen in time. The mother had to defrost the mid-size beast and you know the rest. I think my dear friend is still a little traumatized, but it's always a great story to tell every time we see other.

There's another funny story I like but it's on the "Ouwah" side but I'll tell you anyhow. Years back in Nemaska, there was a snow-sculpting contest for the residents. There were so many talented people that year, but one really stood out. But there was an uproar on the artist's presentation. Santa's sleigh was beautifully carved with the presents in the back. Santa's sleigh couldn't be complete without reindeers. Problem solved! The artist decided to add real caribou from a previous hunting excursion to the show. I thought it was clever, but the artist was disqualified. Thanks to this artist, the rules are crystal clear now.

I want to take this time to wish you all a Happy Christmas. And, I encourage you all to cherish each other. Keep your light shining in 2014. Nelson Mandela once said, "As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same."

Enjoy the holidays and be safe.

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EDITOR IN CHIEF
Will Nicholls

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IYIYUU AYIMUUN EDITOR
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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
J. East, A. German, A. Levitas,
D. Coyle, J. Staniforth, J. Iserhoff, X. Kataquapit,

PHOTOGRAPHY
A. German, N. Diamond,
W. Nicholls, D. Valade

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
J. East

SALES REPRESENTATIVES
Danielle Valade, Ginette Grégoire

DESIGN AND LAYOUT
R. Lawson

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WHERE TO REACH US:
POSTMASTER:
The Nation PRODUCTION OFFICE
4529 CLARK, #403, MONTREAL, QC., H2T 2T3
EDITORIAL & ADS
TEL.: 514-272-3077, FAX: 514-278-9914
The Nation HEAD OFFICE
P.O. BOX 151, CHISASIBI, QC. J0M 1E0
www.nationnews.ca
E-MAIL ADDRESSES:
Editorial: nation@nationnews.ca
news@nationnews.ca
Ads: for Danielle Valade
ads@nationnews.ca
for Ginette Gregoire
publicity@nationnews.ca
Classifieds: news@nationnews.ca

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A democratic icon's last struggle

The world mourns Nelson Mandela, 95

by Akiva Levitas

The struggle against apartheid in South Africa changed the way the world saw race relations. At the centre of this struggle was one man – Nelson Mandela. His familiar smile and compassion stood out as a testament to his ability to reconcile decades of hatred and bitterness and transform South Africa into the democracy that it is today.

Mandela died December 5 at the age of 95. South African President Jacob Zuma declared a 10-day mourning period that culminated in a state funeral December 15.

Despite a lifetime of accomplishment and leadership, Mandela was actually a humble man. Since his death, people have shared anecdotes about him as a leader and father to a new nation. Endearingly referred to as Madiba (his clan name) or Tata (Xhosa for father), Mandela always showed kindness and respect to everyone he met. "I am not a saint," he once said, "unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying."

World leaders and dignitaries turned out in impressive numbers to celebrate Mandela's life at the memorial service in Soweto December 10. Tributes poured in from many, including US President Barack Obama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. "To the people of South Africa – people of every race and walk of life – the world thanks you for sharing Nelson Mandela with us," Obama said in his speech during the memorial. "His struggle was your struggle. His triumph was your triumph. Your dignity and your hope found expression in his life. And your freedom, your democracy is his cherished legacy."

The Canadian delegation at the memorial included current Prime Minister Stephen Harper as well as former prime ministers Jean Chrétien, Brian Mulroney, Kim Campbell and Joe Clark. Opposition Leader Thomas Mulcair was also in attendance despite initially being denied entry into South Africa along with several MPs and the head of the Assembly of First Nations, Shawn Atleo. "(Mandela) changed the conversation, from conflict to reconciliation, from poverty to sharing, from inequality to equality," Atleo said. "We as well have a truth and reconciliation commission happening right now, just like occurred in South Africa."

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, politician, and philanthropist who served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999

In a statement, the Grand Council of the Crees recalled its solidarity with South Africans during the struggle against apartheid in Canada and at the United Nations.

"We drew strength and inspiration from Mandela and his African National Congress comrades' astounding defiance, determination, humility, patience, restraint and their ultimate commitment to a moral reconciliation," said Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. "The long walk to freedom is still underway in South Africa and also in Australia, the United States, Canada and New Zealand to name a few."

"We celebrate the life of Nelson Mandela," added Bill Namagoose, Executive Director of the Grand Council. "He was a beacon of hope in the ongoing global struggle against colonialism, racism, sexism, oppression, dispossession and landlessness."

Canada's historic segregation of its Indigenous population bore a striking resemblance to South African apartheid, which was partly based on the Canadian reserve system. Although there is much work to be done in stabilizing South Africa, Canada can learn from the actions taken by Mandela in bringing together the two sides to work for a better future. "So, too, do we need to follow suit, and have structural changes occur in Canada," Atleo said.

As the world mourns the loss of a great man, Mandela's legacy will remain as an example of the human struggle against racism and for reconciliation.

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The Department of Justice and Correctional Services
wishes the Cree Nation a Happy New Year
and a prosperous 2014.....

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"We've never had a project of this scale. It's the beginning of a lot of things that we could possibly do in this community. **We have to do something for the 100 youth here who turn 18 every year. I want to stop the migration of our youth to Montreal.**"

Chief Paul Gull of Waswanipi

Home-grown power

Waswanipi to manage construction of local hydro substation

by Lyle Stewart

Waswanipi's rapid population and economic growth means that its power demands will soon outstrip Hydro-Québec's local capacity. In a first for Eeyou Istchee, however, the community itself – through the Waswanipi Development Corporation – will manage the construction of a new substation on its Category 2 land.

Not only that, Waswanipi Chief Paul Gull is working to ensure that Waswanipi Cree workers currently employed by Hydro-Québec build the substation.

"I think it would develop some pride here to see Cree electricians who work for Hydro-Québec build this project," said Gull. "I would certainly be proud to see that happen."

Gull negotiated with Réal Laporte, president of Hydro-Québec Équipement and President and CEO of the Société d'énergie de la Baie James (SEBJ), to ensure Waswanipi would manage the project. The Waswanipi Development Corporation (WDC) will partner with Rouyn-Noranda firm Moreau during the construction.

Gull says WDC entities could see up to $14 million in spin-off contracts from the project. The Waswanipi Mishtuk forestry company has already cleared the site for the substation, which underwent an environmental assessment in 2012-13. The development permit was issued last spring.

"We've never had a project of this scale," said Gull. "It's the beginning of a lot of things that we could possibly do in this community. We have to do something for the 100 youth here who turn 18 every year. I want to stop the migration of our youth to Montreal."

Knowing this project was coming, two years ago Gull spoke to graduates of the Niskamoon program who were heading to jobs with Hydro-Québec. "During the ceremony I asked them if they would like to come work for their community," Gull recounted. The young grads were enthusiastic about the idea.

Under the Paix des Braves agreement, Hydro-Québec committed to employing at least 150 Cree employees. Over the past decade, at least 15 Waswanipi community members found jobs with Hydro-Québec. Now Chief Gull wants them to come home, at least for a while.

"They're working all over the place – LG2, LG3, LG4 and at Chibougamau," he observed. "So I asked Hydro-Québec if it would be possible to loan these workers to us during the construction of the substation."

A handful could even stay on after construction to operate the substation, Gull added.

The substation is scheduled to begin construction in the spring and be commissioned in the fall of 2015. It will be connected to Hydro-Québec's newer, more powerful 315-kV grid, which will ensure sufficient electricity will be supplied to the community for the foreseeable future. The current substation, located beside Route 113, is reaching its transforming capacity. The community would soon have suffered power outages during what Hydro-Québec calls the "peak period loss" of one of Waswanipi's two power transformers.

Gull noted that the new power will also allow the nearby Metanor mine to run an extra production shift. Power limits mean the mine can only run one 12-hour shift per day, but plans to add another 12-hour shift once electrical supply is augmented.

For Waswanipi, the new project means energy security, jobs, contracts and sufficient power for the new community centre now under construction.

Votre nouveau gouvernement régional :
un modèle de collaboration entre Jamésiens et Cris

Représentation égale

À compter du 1er janvier 2014, les Jamésiens et les Cris entretiendront des relations plus respectueuses, harmonieuses et constructives que jamais : le Gouvernement régional d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James entre en fonction. Il sera dirigé par un conseil composé d'un nombre égal de représentants jamésiens et cris. Ensemble, les Cris et les Jamésiens favoriseront le développement de la région, assureront une meilleure représentation des populations concernées et relèveront les enjeux et les défis actuels du territoire.

Services maintenus

Le nouveau Gouvernement régional remplacera la Municipalité de Baie-James (MBJ). Il exercera les mêmes compétences, fonctions et pouvoirs sur les terres de la catégorie III situées dans le territoire d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James, que ceux qui étaient jusqu'alors attribués à la MBJ. Les services qui étaient offerts par la MBJ seront maintenus par le Gouvernement régional pour une période de cinq (5) ans. Les citoyens pourront communiquer avec leur Gouvernement régional dans leur langue, que ce soit en français, en cri ou en anglais.

Étape historique

L'entrée en fonction du Gouvernement régional d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James permettra aux Cris et aux Jamésiens de travailler ensemble à la poursuite de leurs objectifs communs. Il s'agit de la toute première structure de gestion du genre au Québec. Cela reflète l'esprit de collaboration et l'ouverture des Cris et des Jamésiens, ce qui bénéficiera à l'ensemble du Québec.

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"I'm gonna take this right foot, and I'm gonna whop you..."

R.I.P. Billy Jack

Actor/director Tom Laughlin died December 12 from complications after contracting pneumonia. He was 82.

Laughlin gained a huge cult following in the early 1970s after directing and starring in *Billy Jack*, a film about a half-breed Vietnam veteran who protected hippies and Indians by using martial arts to battle racist rednecks in a small American town.

Laughlin is credited with changing the way movies were marketed in Hollywood. He was the first to buy airtime on network television during the news hour promoting the release of his films. *Billy Jack* and its two sequels were also instrumental in introducing Asian martial arts to a wide audience in North America, even before Bruce Lee.

Billy Jack was a flop when it was first released in 1971. Laughlin bought back the rights to his film from the studios and re-released it two years later, promoting in on the major networks on opening weekend.

The film was inspired by witnessing mistreatment of Native Americans in his wife's hometown of Winner, South Dakota.

Laughlin as *Billy Jack* was heavily featured in Rezolution Films' award-winning documentary *Reel Injun*.

Laughlin is survived by his three children and wife Delores Taylor, who appeared in all of the *Billy Jack* films.

The family has asked that instead of flowers, donations be sent to Friends of Pine Ridge. Pine Ridge is the Lakota (Sioux) reservation in South Dakota.

Coon Come questions new mining law

The Quebec National Assembly's vote to adopt Bill 70 earlier this month was met with concern by several Aboriginal leaders, including Cree Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. The PQ government bill, which amends several aspects of the province's Mining Act, passed with the support of the opposition Liberals and Coalition Avenir Québec. Only the two members of Québec Solidaire opposed the bill.

In a written report, Coon Come acknowledged the bill's positive elements, praising its recognition of the need to consult Aboriginal communities and to take account of their rights and interests in reconciling mining activities with other possible uses of the territory.

However, Coon Come criticized the bill's requirement that any payments made by mining companies to Native communities be reported and publicized.

"Although the data contained in community agreements, such as Impact Benefit Agreements, would not be published, the amount of 'overall contributions' paid by a mining company, on a mine-by-mine basis, would be disclosed to the Minister and made public," Coon Come wrote, adding that the release of such sensitive financial information would have a negative impact on the Cree in future negotiations with mining companies and in governance negotiations with Canada.

"The disclosure of payments received by the Cree under mining IBAs could provide Canada with valuable information in its attempts to impose OSR (Own Source Revenue) and to reduce its own payments under the JBNQA and other programs. This could act as a disincentive for the Cree to enter into agreements with mining companies," Coon Come observed.

Despite his issues with the bill, the Grand Chief stated that he looks forward to strengthening the Cree Nation's relationship with Quebec. He asked the Quebec government to oppose any future federal attempts to cut payments to Cree organizations as a result of the public-disclosure rules of the new law.

feature

Reflections of the past and aspirations for the future

Cree leaders talk about 2013 and 2014

by Amy German

As the New Year approaches we all begin to engage in the familiar ritual of looking back at the highs and lows of the past year to examine our successes and failures while looking towards to future at everything we want to achieve in this time of renewal.

It was with this in mind that *the Nation* decided to poll as many Cree community, government, industry and entity leaders we could reach to find out what this past year was been like and what their aspirations are for the future.

We sent them the following three questions:

1) Please tell us how your 2013 went and what details you would like to share with the rest of the Cree world about it?

2) What is your dream (for your organization and for yourself as the leader of that organization) for 2014?

3) How will you carry out that dream?

The answers that follow came from the hearts and minds of those who wished to share their hardships, achievements, hopes and dreams. Some are incredibly heartwarming and some just outright startling.

The Nation would like to thank each participant for sharing their thoughts with fellow Eeyouch.

Chief Reggie Neeposh
Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation

Wachiya! Kwey!

On behalf of the Council and the entire community of Oujé-Bougoumou I would like to extend our best wishes to everyone for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I would like to share with the Nation readers some of the highlights of 2013 in our community.

a) Participation in Signing Ceremony for Complementary Agreement #25

We were honoured to participate in a very major step related to the final establishment of Oujé-Bougoumou as the ninth Cree community under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. We participated, along with the Cree Nation of Mistissini, in the signing of Complementary Agreement #25, which provides for the transfer of lands from Mistissini to Oujé-Bougoumou. This agreement provides the land, which will form the basis of Oujé-Bougoumou's land regime.

This was an opportunity not only to mark an historic occasion, but it also provided us with an opportunity to express our thanks to the members of the Mistissini community who have been so supportive for many years of our efforts to have our own village. Mistameegwetch again to the people of Mistissini.

b) Journey of Hope

In our continuing effort to address the needs of our community's youth, and to ensure that no one in our community is left behind, we have continued an innovative youth engagement initiative. I have long held a personal vision of working with our young adults faced with difficult life challenges by exposing them to a healing and restoration journey based on the land. Our first initiative, in March 2012, took place at the Camp Corvette site at km 282 on the Hydro-Québec Road where 12 of our young Cree adults participated in a project to help them define their dreams and visions, and to help them to achieve those objectives. We shared the important Cree values and principles that could help guide them in the future. As a result of this innovative program nearly half of the participants have returned to school to further their educations.

Reggie Neeposh, Chief of Oujé-Bougoumou

This local program is directed at working with two segments of our community's youth – those who we deem to be "high risk" and those who are already involved, in one way or another, with the justice system.

Our unique initiative, which has been implemented over the last two years, essentially consists of taking identified youth and young adults on a healing journey in a land-based setting. The youth are provided with an opportunity to both have direct experience with Cree traditional activities, while at the same time, they have an opportunity to speak openly and freely about their personal challenges and struggles within a safe and accepting environment.

Based on the success of the first year of this program, we held a further session for our youth in February-March 2013 involving 14 of our young adults. I believe that this program has been very successful as a way to strengthen Cree values, our traditional way of life on our land, and it has provided a unique opportunity for our young adults to receive the support and attention they need as they face the future.

c) Impact and Benefits Agreement (BlackRock Metals)

After several years of negotiations we successfully concluded an Impact and Benefits Agreement with BlackRock Metals, Inc. This company is establishing a project to develop the iron and titanium resources at a site within our traditional territory. The IBA provides for a range of environmental monitoring and control measures, training, employment and contracting opportunities for the life of the mining project, which at this time is estimated to be at least 30 years. We are looking forward to a positive and mutually supportive relationship with BlackRock Metals for many years to come.

We are also looking forward to 2014. Here are just some of the issues that are on the horizon for us in the coming year.

a) Continuation of Journey of Hope

We will continue to reach out to our high-risk youth with the intention of getting everyone on a positive track, which can lead to a meaningful and fulfilling life. I will be organizing similar sessions for this next year. By all accounts, the Journey of Hope has thus far been a success. This is an initiative which we believe needs to be sustained and continued annually as it addresses issues which are critical to the positive development and growth of the community's youth.

b) Collaboration with Cree Nation Youth Initiatives

We are looking forward to working closely with the Cree Nation government in the implementation of capacity-building outreach initiatives to our youth. They can be encouraged to obtain training and education and develop important skills so that they can make a contribution to the building of the Cree Nation. We are fully committed to this crucial initiative on behalf of the Cree Nation and we will do our part in Oujé-Bougoumou to make this initiative a success.

c) Final Steps to Recognition of Oujé-Bougoumou

We look forward in 2014 to finalizing all the remaining steps to be fully recognized as a Cree band under the JBNQA. We anticipate that this will take place during the first quarter of 2014. Finally, all the measures will have been taken to bring our community into the JBNQA as a full and equal band, along with the other Cree bands. This achievement will give us one more reason to celebrate and we are looking forward to that event.

d) Creation of Assinica National Park

We are also moving forward toward the creation of the Assinica Cree Heritage Lands project, which will see the transformation of the current wildlife reserve into both a park and a portion remaining as a wildlife reserve. It will be managed by Oujé-Bougoumou with local control over the remaining wildlife reserve.

e) Abandoned Mine Restoration

We have continued to work diligently to ensure that the restoration work related to the Principale Mine site, an abandoned mine within our traditional territory, is carried out with full involvement of Oujé-Bougoumou and according to the highest environmental standards. At the same time, the restoration work will provide important employment and contracting opportunities for our members.

f) Capital Projects

We are looking forward to a number of capital projects over the next year that will fill a need for various facilities, and at the same time, will provide employment opportunities for our people. We will, for example, during 2014, see the expansion of our Capissisit Lodge, which will increase our capacity to accommodate more visitors. It will also provide new conference facilities for a wide range of meetings, workshops and conferences.

It is our belief in Oujé-Bougoumou that there is so much to be grateful for, and there are so many opportunities before us – as individuals, as a community and as a nation. We are looking forward to working hard for the continuing development of our community, and in the building of our Cree Nation. We are entering the New Year filled with optimism, enthusiasm and hope.

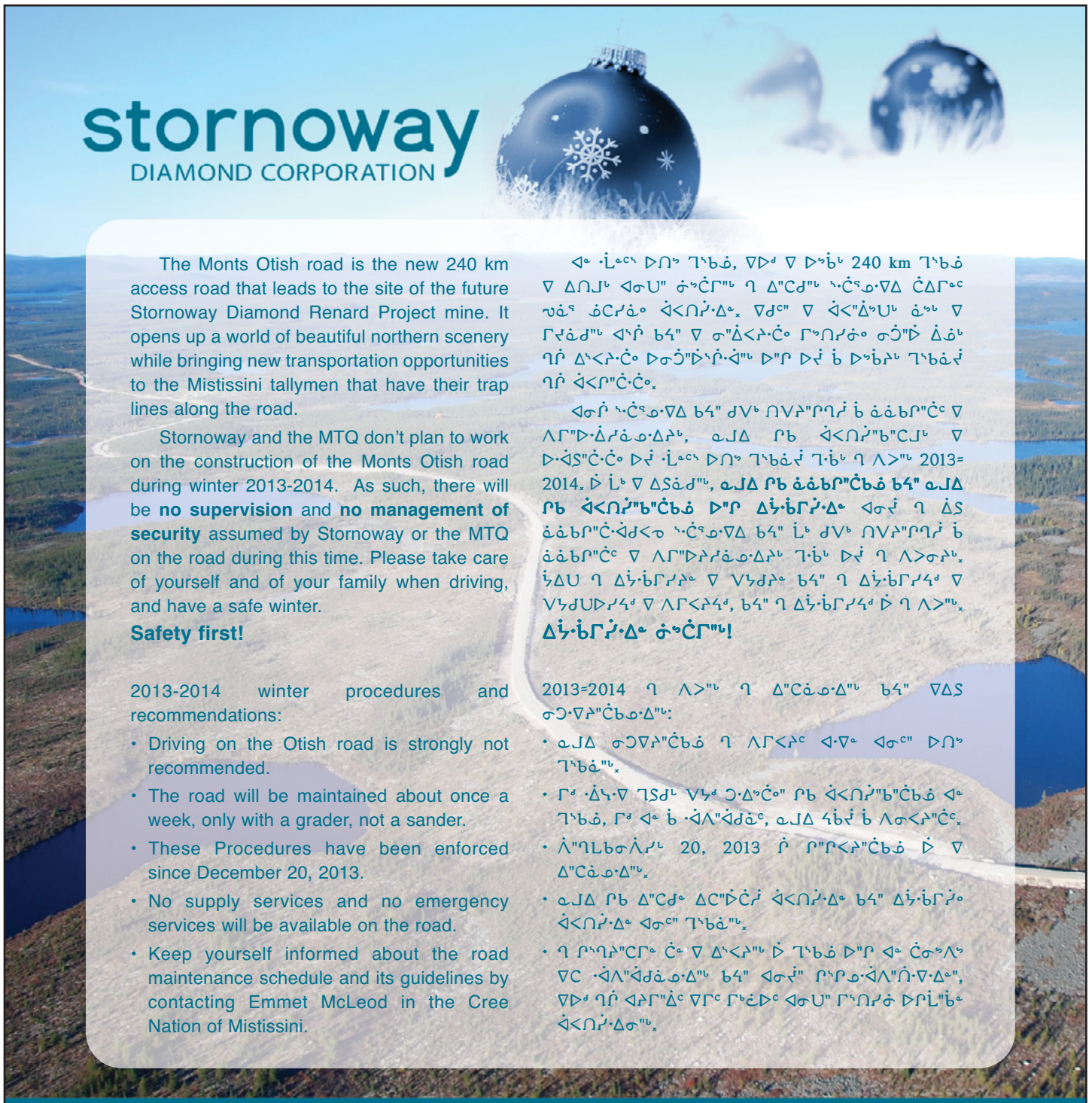
Robert Baribeau President/CEO of the Cree Construction & Development Company

Robert Baribeau, President/CEO

Cree Construction and Development Company

1) First I would like to thank every one of our employees whether it is in CCDC, Gestion ADC or one of our joint ventures/partnerships. It is you, the employees, who make us what we are. I also want to thank all of our partners and clients for your trust year after year.

It's been a year of many changes for our companies; there have been many departures and some new faces in our companies. We have had some successes



The Monts Otish road is the new 240 km access road that leads to the site of the future Stornoway Diamond Renard Project mine. It opens up a world of beautiful northern scenery while bringing new transportation opportunities to the Mistissini tallymen that have their trap lines along the road.

Stornoway and the MTQ don't plan to work on the construction of the Monts Otish road during winter 2013-2014. As such, there will be **no supervision** and **no management of security** assumed by Stornoway or the MTQ on the road during this time. Please take care of yourself and of your family when driving, and have a safe winter.

Safety first!

2013-2014 winter procedures and recommendations:

- Driving on the Otish road is strongly not recommended.
- The road will be maintained about once a week, only with a grader, not a sander.
- These Procedures have been enforced since December 20, 2013.
- No supply services and no emergency services will be available on the road.
- Keep yourself informed about the road maintenance schedule and its guidelines by contacting Emmet McLeod in the Cree Nation of Mistissini.

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2013=2014 ᑫ ᐊᓂᓱ ᑫ ᐃ"ᑕᓅᓄᐃ"ᓱ ᒃᑦ" ᐁᐃᔭ ᓄᑐᐁᔨᑕᓅᓄᐃ"ᓱ:

- ᓇᒍᐃ ᓄᑐᐁᔨᑕᓅᒃ ᑫ ᐊᒥᑦᔨᑦ ᐊᐁᓄ ᐊᓂᑦ" ᐅᑎᓱ ᑐᑦᒃᓅᓂ";
- ᒥᐟ ᐃᐊᓵᐁ ᑐᒃᔭᐟᓵ ᐯᓴᐟᓂ ᑐᑌᐣᐃᓄᓂᑦ ᑫᓱ ᒥᑦᒃᓅᓂ, ᒥᐟ ᐊᓂ ᒃ ᐊᐃᓵᐊᐟᓅᓂᑦ, ᓇᒍᐃ ᓴᒃᔨ ᒃ ᐱᓄᐊᔨᓄᑦᓂ;
- ᐋ"ᑌᒪᒃᓄᐋᔨᓵ 20, 2013 ᑭ ᑎ"ᑎᐊᔨᓄᑦᒃᓅ ᐅ ᐁ ᐃ"ᑕᓅᓄᐃ"ᓱ;
- ᓇᒍᐃ ᑎᒃ ᐃ"ᑕᓂᓂ ᐃᑕ"ᐅᑦᔨ ᐊᐊᓄᐣᐃᓄᓂ ᒃᑦ" ᐃᔭᓵᒃᑎᓐᒋᓄ ᐊᐊᓄᐣᐃᓄᓂ ᐊᓄᑦ" ᑐᑦᒃᓅᓂ";
- ᑌ ᑎᔪᑲᓄᑕᒥᓂ ᑦᓂ ᐁ ᐃᔪᐊᔨᓱ ᐅ ᑐᑦᒃᓅ ᐅ"ᑎ ᐊᓂ ᑦᓅᓴᐱᔪ ᐁᑕ ᐧᐊᐱ"ᐊᐃᓂᓅᓄᐃ"ᓱ ᒃᑦ" ᐊᓄᔨᓂ ᑎᔪᓅᓂᐱᐊ"ᐣᓂᐁᐧᐃᓵ", ᐁᐅᐟ ᑌᓴ ᐊᐟᑎ"ᐃᓵ ᐁᑎᑕ ᐧᐊᐱ"ᐊᐃᓂᓅᓄᐃ"ᓱ ᑎᔪᓅᓄᐃ"ᓱ ᐊᓄᑦ" ᑎᔪᓅᓂᐱᐊ"ᐣᓂᐁᐧᐃᓵ ᐅᑎᒪ"ᒃᓂ ᐊᐸᓂᐣᐃᓄᓂᑦ";

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in forming new relationships with aspects to future mining projects that will play an important role in providing construction and employment opportunities in the coming years for our people.

A slow construction season has given us time to reflect on our operations and we have made adjustments to all levels of operation. It has been a good opportunity to adjust to these new circumstances in our market.

2) Our vision for 2014 is to continue to participate in the Cree Nation building through participation in contracts and providing project management services. As for Gestion ADC we will look forward to working with our recently formed partnerships in catering and housekeeping.

As president of CCDC I look forward to seeing the Cree Nation companies playing a bigger role in development projects happening in our territory this year. In 2013, I know many companies, including our own, would have liked to have seen a larger portion of contracts happening in Eeyou Istchee go to Cree companies. I am hopeful and determined that this coming year we will see all levels of Cree government and entrepreneurs exercise the proper influences to guarantee that Crees will benefit from the activity that is happening within our borders.

3) I think that in order to ensure that the Cree businesses have a greater access to opportunities we must begin communicating together in a regular manner. We must meet with our leaders and inform them of what is happening in Eeyou Istchee and ask for their collaboration in meeting with the developers so that we can open a positive dialogue with them. Communication is the key to any successful relationship.

At this time I would like to take the time to wish everyone a very happy holiday season with their families! Enjoy your time with family and keep the little ones happy and busy during this special time of the year! I also want to wish each and every one of you a Prosperous New Year filled with health, love and happiness!

Virginia Wabano, President
Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA)

May the New Year bring these wishes to all of you, warmth of love, comfort of home and joy for your children. Hopes and dreams, a light to guide your path, helping hands to strengthen unity, serenity and peace within your mind, heart and soul. Happy New Year wishes for you all.

CWEIA Board of Directors and Staff

For 2014, the CWEIA has the following on their agenda:

- Gender-based consultations in three communities: Whapmagoostui, Chisasibi and Mistissini
- Regional event on March 8 for International Women's Day (pending funding)
- A healing conference for men/women
- A Canadian Human Rights Commission – Aboriginal Women's Roundtable, February 2014

Chief Paul Gull of Waswanipi

Chief Paul Gull
Waswanipi First Nation

The year 2013 marked a major change for Aboriginal people right across Canada. As a Cree nation we have seen many events focusing on the capacity to build our communities and our people.

The Cree First Nation of Waswanipi prides itself for the strength of our youth and the skills of our Elders.

We have seen an extraordinary number of graduates in 2013, and our youth are working hard to achieve their educational goals. This means success for the development of our community.

This year we also opened new facilities for our Elders. I am glad that our cultural department hosts our Elders and brings them together. They are the support and backbone of Waswanipi. They make some of the best lunches I ever had!

One vision for our community is the development and potential of biomass projects. We are presently reviewing projects, and hopefully Waswanipi will implement a biomass heating plant. These types of projects are greener, provide quality heating and rescue power consumption. It is an interesting time for growth and we are reviewing many additional possibilities.

I would like to wish all communities a happy New Year. It is exciting time in the Cree Nation and I look forward to the challenges of 2014.

Bella Moses Petawabano, Chair
Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

1) This year we celebrated the opening of new Community Miyupimaatisiiun Centres in Eastmain, Nemaska, Mistissini and Waswanipi, where we carried out extensive renovation and extension of the existing building. Notice that we don't call CMCs "clinics" or "dispensaries" anymore.

They are much more than places you go to get a pill or a bandage. We have developed a community health approach that supports families through every stage of life. The coming years will see construction of the remaining CMCs as well as a brand-new hospital in Chisasibi.

The central platform of my campaign was to support sustained efforts to improve the quality of services in our communities. I'm very proud of the progress we have made in the last year, including a 30% increase in mental-health consultations in the communities,

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Wishing you a wonderful New Year 2014!

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strengthening our Youth Protection system with more training for YP workers, and the launch of the first mobile FASD diagnostic clinic in Canada.

As part of our continuing effort to bring increased transparency to our organization, our new website, www.creehealth.org, was launched in December 2012. We also have a Facebook page and Twitter feed under the "creehealth" name. These tools proved very important for communicating with the population during the forest-fire crisis last summer, which saw the evacuation of 261 community members from Eastmain to Val d'Or. The Cree Health Board was very involved in that crisis because it was the vulnerable population that was evacuated, and it is the Cree Health Board that identified those people based on a review of their medical file.

We welcomed four new members to our board this year: Patricia George of Whapmagoostui, George L. Pachanos of Chisasibi, Lisa Shecapio of Oujé-Bougoumou and Ida Gilpin of Wemindji.

Remember, your elected community representative is there to listen to your concerns and suggestions about health and social services provided by your Cree Heath Board. I will personally visit many communities in 2014 accompanied by the Commissioner of Complaints and Quality of Services of the Cree Health Board. Together we will address the many issues faced by community members.

2) In terms of services we know that there will be increased tele-health services thanks to the ECN fibre-optic network, which has now been hooked up to the Cree Health Board establishments. This will greatly reduce the need for people to travel down south for their appointments. Soon we will be offering eye exams for people with diabetes, mental health consultations by videoconference, and other services like speech therapy are being explored.

I also want to mention Iiyuu Ahtaawin Miyupimaatisiiun Planning. This project is working with each community to help develop a vision and plan for Miyupimaatisiiun. Our communities are growing and changing fast, and we need to ensure that we are building healthy and happy communities where children can play safely, people can live active lives, eat good food, especially traditional food, and care for each other. In speeches I gave this year at conferences on health and healing, I often spoke about Chiyaameihtamuun – living together in harmony, according to our most cherished traditions. This is my dream for the Cree Health Board and for all our people.

Dianne Reid, President/CEO
Aanischaaukamikw

Dianne Reid, President/CEO
Aanischaaukamikw (the Cree Cultural Institute)

1) Aanischaaukamikw just celebrated its first year of operations with such a variety of visitors from government officials, Cree businesses and organizations, student groups, and visitors from Panama, a Himalayan princess soon to be queen, a WWA wrestler and Hollywood star Adam Beach! I would like to see people to check out our award-winning website and contact the amazing staff that work for Aanischaaukamikw, check our Twitter and Facebook sites.

2) Aanischaaukamikw received its Category A status as a standard museum. I would like to promote the richness of a living culture of Eeyou Istchee to the world. Here we come in 2014!

3) Cyberspace is global and making that connection to all museum partners throughout the world can make the connection to Cree artifacts and objects in other museum institutions. Of course, this will need international marketing dollars to do this.

Our outreach activities to the communities also must be the key to the living culture of Eeyou Istchee. Come and see us at www.aanischaaukamikw.ca

Rodney Mark
Deputy Grand Chief

2013 was a year of change for me and my family.

First there was my mother-in-law's passing; I sure will miss her rabbit and dumplings. She was an amazing cook and loving mother to her children, her grandchildren will miss her and we be thinking of her during the holidays.

The second change was leaving my job as Chief of Wemindji; I will surely miss all of those kickass planning session we did over the eight years.

Third change was being elected as Deputy Grand Chief; this was super

Wemendji Chief Rodney Mark

CHIBOUGAMAU EENOU FRIENDSHIP CENTRE
CENTRE D'AMITIÉ EENOU DE CHIBOUGAMAU
(CEFC/CAEC)

From our hearts to yours

May the New Year fulfill its promise of good health, prosperity, accomplishment and good will.

Join us throughout 2014 as we pursue our mission of liaison, cultural sharing and community growth for and with the urban Aboriginal community.

Together, we make a difference. Meegwich for being a vital part of it all!

The Board and staff of the Chibougamau Eenou Friendship Centre

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exciting and I am looking forward to the next four years.

My hope for the New Year (is of course for us to be a KICKASS Nation), to have clean and safe communities for our people and for the Grand Council/CRA to be more responsive to local leaderships.

How we will achieve this is to be more present in the communities and to work with local leadership.

Message to you all: be kind to yourself, be awesome, laugh out loud and believe in the beauty of your dreams. Merry Christmas and have KA (Kick Ass) New Year.

Chief Stanley George
Whapmagoostui First Nation

Chief Stanley George
Whapmagoostui First Nation

1) 2013 was another year that just flew right by me in the blink of an eye.

So many changes and challenges are taking place that as the leader, it is very hard to breath it all in.

The elections took place in August 2012 and it takes a lot of time for people to swallow the power of democracy despite all the facts and realities.

Merely winning by 7 votes, with two candidates running, the commotion really escalated and did not calm down until early winter.

But what is done is done and we have to move on, the world doesn't stop turning when you win or lose, and it won't end either.

Whapmagoostui First Nation has been plagued by past financial woes that have been escalating drastically since 2006.

To be honest, when I first was elected in 2009, I walked into a $9.2 million deficit.

Today, these challenges still take a toll with our progress and anticipated development. It has been four years we have been under close scrutiny with AAND-INAC. This has caused our credibility to be flushed down the drain in the eyes of our suppliers, contractors and certain levels within the CRA.

Despite that, with dedication and commitment from certain senior staff of the WFN and direct assistance from CRA's financial advisors, we have managed to eliminate 55% of the cumulative deficit.

We even managed to pull a stunt within our community by pursuing landscaping project, a future glimpse of how we can develop our community and restore confidence to investing in our own town. Our main focus was on housing renovation.

A big portion of our special projects fund was injected to roofing, exterior and minor interior renovation in our existing social housing units.

As a risk in the eyes of officials, a privilege to us, after three long years of no housing construction due to the setbacks in the hands of AAND, we finally took a chance and constructed two social housing units. This will indicate to our members that housing is top priorities in the next five years.

2) My first and utmost priority is to eliminate the community deficit.

By the end of 2014, Whapmagoostui will be debt free and the next Chief will not be walking into the same awkward situation that I did.

Our people have to understand that we can no longer live the moment and look at what will benefit us today. We have to understand that everything that is given to us should not be taken for granted.

The message has to be clear, what we have, we are borrowing from our children and their children. Every dollar we misspent, they will feel the impacts. Every natural resource we destroy and take away, they will feel the impact.

Another thing I will be working on is restructuring and realigning our organization to accommodate our future needs and services. This will play a vital role with all the new agreements we have been signing.

Like many leaders and chiefs, I have many dreams and visions, but if I am a lone voice in the wilderness, I will not succeed, I will not prevail. I serve the people and they basically decide if my visions will prosper and blossom. Our communities have to realize that we need to focus on ourselves first so we can think and act accordingly in the best interest of our future generations. The lateral violence must end and we have to find community-based programs to deal with them. This has always been my dream with little success.

3) I will continue to make the best of my term. There are too many politicians in my community where a lot of decisions are being made based on public opinion. It is always a challenge for a chief with his council to operate like this as they are constantly being threatened to be overthrown by the opposition and their supporters. This dilemma has to end or it will continue to follow our future leaders. The thing I hear about myself the most is that I am uneducated and too young to lead the community. I will continue my journey. All the decisions we make are transparent and consistent to our financial recovery face.

Challenges of being a young leader is that the Elders have to respect you, respect the decision and empower my generation to lead. After all, it won't be long when we will become the elders of our own communities. We must continue to be united, continue to have one voice and respect the visions of our leaders. I am merely asking guidance and support from the Elders, stand with us and stand by us as you have always done in the past. The decisions and direction we make today, will greatly benefit our grandchildren. We have done nothing wrong and we will continue to move forward.

Jo-Ann Toulouse, Executive Director, Chibougamau Eenou Friendship Centre

Jo-Ann Toulouse, Executive Director

Chibougamau Eenou Friendship Centre

2013 was a challenging year for the Chibougamau Eenou Friendship Centre. Community members are increasingly busy and confused by the closing of the hostel service, leading them to believe that the centre itself is closed. We are very happy to say that we will be 44 years old next week and going strong!

Amongst many projects, the Awash Utamet Childcare Centre, a 60-place publicly funded urban Aboriginal Childcare hosting both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children, is in architectural plan-mode. Come spring, we expect to have been through the tendering process and well on the way to the construction phase. This will be a tangible aspect to building bridges in our community and developing friendships and respect at a very early age. We are grateful for the partnership of the Centre d'étude collègiale à Chibougamau and community efforts that are making this dream come true.

For the first time, the Cree Trust invested in the core funding of the Centre, providing much needed funds to help sustain activities and services. Though modest, the funding made a vital difference that was felt throughout the year. Also, 2013 allowed us to double the size of our shop not in quantity of goods but finally having the room to respectfully display the fine craftsmanship of our artisans. We increased proximity with our community through an expanded calendar of activities, instigated collaborations and potential partnerships for all of Northern Quebec through the Entrepreneurial Symposium and hired amazing staff to do the best work in the world – serve our community! I love my job! Does it show?

We are living history day by day. For years, I have said that the eyes of the world are upon us, watching how we build and nurture profound social change in the territory in respect and honour of all peoples and all things. The new regional government is our testament and ambition to construct an inclusive, pro-active and attentive governance willing and able to lead the region in our collective best interests for the long term. Our dream and intent is to lend our support and competence to actualise that governance in the daily lives of our community and region.

Our mission is to help improve the quality of life of our people living and transiting through town. It is our heartfelt wish and intent to provide all members near and far, with an adequate building within which to host them. The centre as it is now is small, old and very tired. A $5 million project, it is time to make come true; $750,000 has been committed thus far. In 2014, we will empower our partners to champion this project and invite the community to contribute in tangible ways through various initiatives that will leave their mark.

We are at a crossroads as a service provider. The pressure to provide social and culturally respectful training and services throughout our area mounts and we respond to this shift through the hiring of new staff and new projects built with our partners for long-term growth. As an active community leader, the CEFC is sustained in its efforts by the people who access the programming and services of the centre. All of us make the centre what it is and will be in 2014, and in the years to come. Our dream is to remain as pertinent tomorrow as we have been since 1969. Our motor is remaining ever-aware of the evolving needs of the community and responding with success in that timely, culturally relevant and competent manner that are the hallmarks of friendship centres across the country.

Happy holidays!

Joshua Iserhoff

Youth Grand Chief

1) First and foremost I want take this time to wish everyone a Happy New Year and hope that it may be a healthy and prosperous one for you and your family.

I believe that we did well this year and the challenges that we have encountered had us work harder to better the organization and its programs.

I believe that our youth have been given a significant challenge, especially from the successful Roundtable on Capacity Building back in March. Following that, I had a clearer vision of where we need to go and how to get there.

Over the past year, a main focus has been the creation of a strategic plan for CNYC, a process that is not yet complete. The planning committee I assembled met numerous times throughout the year to come up with a revised mission for CNYC, some very ambitious program objectives and a proposed new organization structure to carry this plan forward.

The CNYC board will be meeting in January to review the draft, and then from there I hope to take it to all 10 communities and regional entities for consultation, as well as Council/Board.

We have been working very hard now for over a year to come up with this strategic plan which will align the Cree Nation Youth Council with the vision of the Cree Nation as a whole. It is now our opportunity to show the Cree Nation that we accept the challenge before us and that we can do our part.

2) My dream for CNYC is to see it become the organization that is truly the champion and the catalyst for youth development in Eeyou Istchee.

With all the agreements signed by the Cree Nation leadership in the last 10

Joshua Iserhoff, Youth Grand Chief

years or so, we are finally able as a people to be the masters of our own destiny and create a strong and prosperous Aboriginal nation.

The leadership has said that for this vision to be realized there needs to be a focus on the youth. It will be up to the youth to develop the skills, the knowledge and the capacity to take on this challenge and learn how to genuinely control the territory.

There is an incredible amount of responsibility that our youth will be entrusted with so we need to have dynamic, educated, driven youth who will take on the challenges from what has already been accomplished by our leaders.

We are being called upon to step up to the plate and to accept the challenge of building the Cree Nation. To do this it is crucial that we strengthen CNYC and its role, function and responsibilities.

3) The "call to action" directed at youth by the Cree Nation leadership has been serious. This is why the Roundtable on Capacity-Building was held and it is why that initiative is now going into all the communities beginning in January.

Over the coming year, I plan to finalize the CNYC strategic plan in consultation with our many stakeholders – youth, community leaders, CNG leaders and the many regional organizations and entities that play a key role in youth development. From there we will begin the process of transforming the organization to become more effective, results-oriented and accountable. The planned new structure will also assist CNYC in coordinating activities with other stakeholders, and in diversifying our funding sources so we can achieve more.

By the end of 2014, I hope it will be clear that youth want to be an important part of the modern Cree Nation, that we are ready to do what we can to further the vision of the Cree Nation, and that we understand what we are being called upon to do in order to contribute to the building of a trailblazing and strong Cree Nation which can be a model for the world.

Kathleen Wooten, Chair
Cree School Board

1) The Cree School Board has worked on many projects over the year, but three things it has done this past year are: first, the Council has gone full swing into its Ownership Linkage meetings with some Cree Nations and Cree entities.

This is an opportunity for the Council to listen to the Cree Nations and entities, organizations and other groups about their educational concerns. As a result of these Ownership Linkage meetings, the Council prepared a summary of the trends that derived from these meetings.

As well, the Council reviewed and amended its Ends and Executive Limitations policies as a result of the concerns raised by the various Cree Nations and entities. Second, a highlight for the Board was joining the Cree Regional Authority on a fact-finding trip to New York City regarding the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ). HCZ developed various programs to support school-age children, in particular children at risk, to succeed at school. "Whatever It Takes" is the mantra of the adults who work in the Harlem Children Zone schools; they work to help the children attain success in the HCZ schools from daycare to college. Third, the Council, through its Governance Development Committee, initiated two review processes and set up two working groups. One working group is reviewing the Cree Education Act and the other is reviewing the Cree Component of Cree Education. The premise of setting up these review processes is to reinforce and strengthen the Cree aspects of both the Cree Education Act and the Cree component of Cree Education.

2) Having initiated the change process to improve the quality of Cree Education, my dream is to create a Cree education system that has a consistently high graduation rate of 95% plus. So, maybe not for 2014, but hopefully within a few years.

3) While the overall graduation rate for 2012-13 dropped slightly this year, some community schools saw an increase in their graduation rates. For example, Voyageur Memorial School was one school whose graduation rate increased this past year. The Cree School Board needs to address the consistent low graduation rates from its schools. The Cree School Board is and will be working to address this issue; it is aware that certain factors have an impact on the graduation rates such as drop-out rates, absenteeism and so on. Support systems, such as helping the students to prepare for their provincial exams, as well as instituting the Guaranteed Viable Curriculum at the Secondary Levels (from Secondary I to Secondary V) will need to be developed to assist our students to succeed. The School Board will do whatever it takes to ensure that all children succeed within its system. The Cree School Board will carry on the momentum that it has started to improve the Cree education system; the Cree School Board must also work in partnership with parents, teachers and other members of the Cree Nation in order to succeed in reaching its mission.

On behalf of the Council and the Cree School Board, I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the Cree Nation a safe and happy Christmas; I wish you all good health, prosperity and a joyous New Year! May our Creator bless you all!

In this time of sharing, reflection and friendship, UQAT hopes that all your dearest wishes come true!

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Romeo Saganash, MP for Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eeyou

Romeo Saganash
MP for Abitibi–Baie-James–Nunavik–Eeyou

I guess I can say, fairly, that after a difficult moment in late 2012, I returned to Parliament Hill with a renewed perspective in January 2013.

I arrived at a moment when the Idle No More Movement was at its peak, with the huge demonstration happening in front of the Parliament of Canada, while only some Chiefs accepted to meet with the Prime Minister. I recall my Grand Chief attended the meeting, and I thought it was the right decision.

Coincidently, on that very day of January 11, 2013, I introduced my Private Member's Bill, C-469. This act will ensure that all laws adopted by Parliament are in compliance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Donald Nicholls
Director of Justice, CRA

Each year is a blessing, and our Nation continues to grow. We have established many new things; the benefit will be seen in the life and energy that the people breathe into them. We are guided by our past, but are driven by our present and the hopes for our future. In the end, we value our families, friends and communities – and this does not change.

For next year, we hope to bring more healing, togetherness and positive change in the lives of the people we care about. We wish to have strength that a community brings to address some of the bigger change we wish. We will continue with our initiatives and new services such as conflict resolution at the community level, and build upon values.

Anything of importance has to be done with as many people as possible; it can start with your team and department, but needs to include partnerships and collaborations with other organizations and communities for change to occur and to be sustainable. So, we will continue to advocate that more people need to be involved in the solutions and growth we look forward to.

Reggie Bobbish, Director
Eeyou-Eenou Police Force

As many of you know, the Department of the Eeyou Eenou Police Force officially began its operations as a Regional Police Force in Eeyou Istchee in April 2011.

Many will recall the difficult and challenging transition we have experienced, particularly with the shortage of manpower for some of the local police detachments.

In 2013, the EEPF has delivered on its promise to train and develop more Cree police officers in order to meet the needs in terms of manpower allocations.

On June 28, 2013, a total of seven Cree police officers have successfully completed the Basic Training Program in Police Patrolling at the École nationale de police du Québec.

In addition, on December 13, 2013, we also witnessed the graduation ceremony of 14 Cree special constables.

This year alone, the EEPF has literally trained, developed and delivered more Cree police officers and special constables than ever before.

Not to mention we still have 16 enrolled in our second cohort of Cree students who are expected to complete the Police Tech program at Collège Ellis in Drummondville sometime in May 2014.

Finally, we have already received numerous applications for the third cohort of Cree students that wish to pursue a professional career as a police officer of the Eeyou Eenou Police Force.

As for our vision for the future of policing services in Eeyou Istchee, senior officers of the EEPF are constantly pushing and encouraging all local police detachments to adhere to community-based policing.

Community-based policing takes a different approach from traditional policing. This approach encourages officers to take part of the community sphere and become more socially active with the people.

After all, it has been proven, time and time again, that community-based policing and its prevention programs are the most efficient and effective way to reduce criminal activity.

We are looking to reduce crime rates proactively with the support of the public, we want to reconnect with the people we serve and strengthen our relationships based on the fundamentals of trust.

Needless to say, transforming policing practices from reactive to proactive will not be an easy task. I believe everyone can agree that it can sometimes be very difficult to change our old ways.

But with consistent effort and perseverance, we will continue to gradually transform the way we carry out our duties and play a more active role in aiding the community stakeholders.

As a matter of fact, in 2013, we were pleased to introduce a number of pilot projects prevention programs in certain communities, noticeably the Police Cadet program.

We also have the Crime Stoppers program, Gun Safety program, READY program, Vehicle Safety Inspection program, Safe Cycling program, Door Tag program, just to name a few.

In conclusion, we would like to stress out that the Department of the Eeyou Eenou Police Force cannot be fully effective in accomplishing its mission without the partnership of community stakeholders.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a very safe Christmas holiday period and may you find joy, comfort and peace in the presence of your families and loved ones.

Like diamonds in the sky

Stornoway discusses its bountiful transition year

by Amy German

Renard Diamond Mine Site, October 2013. Inset: Freddie Mianscum at Renard site

While Stornaway Diamond Corporation spokesperson Ghislain Poirier insists that 2013 has been a "year of transitions," the mining giant can boast of a successful relationship with their partners in the Renard Project, the Crees of Eeyou Istchee.

"We are proud to say that we didn't so much negotiate an agreement with the Crees but we built this agreement together," said Poirier. "It was a different approach and each party has their own commitments in the agreement and their own concerns and so this has become a real win-win," said Poirier.

While the Renard project is still in its initial phase, the main goal of the past year was to complete the extension of Highway 167 to the site. The road's completion means the project is almost shovel ready.

Poirier said the company has all of the necessary permits, mining lease, restoration plan, social acceptability and airstrip in place. The final hurdle for the company is to secure adequate financing.

"Our target is to meet this goal by the first quarter of 2014," said Poirier. "While we had hoped to achieve it by the end of this year, due to the difficulty in the current market it was not possible. We need a little bit more than $800 million, half of which has already been secured. So now we are working towards getting the rest."

Poirier said that having the Cree onboard has been an incredible asset as it was thanks to their partnership that Stornoway was able to negotiate the road and airstrip projects with the government so quickly.

When it came to road negotiations, Poirier said that Mistissini's Eskan Holding Company played an important role by creating a consortium of Cree and Chibougamau enterprises, build the highway extension.

"When people know that the road they are building will be theirs since it is on their territory and is one that they will be using, it makes a huge difference. Everyone was smiling on this construction site," said Poirier.

According to Poirier, the work environment and the relationships between

Sydney Swallow - Kiskinshiish Manager and also Heavy Machinery Operator

September 2013 - The mining road is now connected

those on the job site only keep improving as the bonds between these workers strengthened.

On top of that, the project was completed two months ahead of schedule and came in at 10% below the budget – something Poirier credits largely to the effectiveness and the productivity of Eskan and its sub-contractors.

Another area of accomplishment is the support Stornoway was able to provide Kiskinshiish Camp Services, a newly created 100% Cree-owned company based in Mistissini for catering and janitorial services.

Part of the agreement signed with the Cree laid the groundwork for Stornoway to provide business opportunities for the tallymen and the necessary support to do so.

According to Poirier, this is a joint venture between Gestion ADC (a subsidiary of the Cree Construction & Development Co.) and the family of Sydney Swallow, a M-11 tallyman.

The joint venture was able to employ several of Swallow's 12 children with Kiskinshiish at the Lagopede camp. Nannie, Swallow's wife, is now a manager of this business.

"For Stornoway, the success of Kiskinshiish is a real achievement because we have contributed to the development of a sustainable Cree enterprise with the strong support of Gestion ADC. We are proud of Kiskinshiish's performance and are confident this family business will flourish," said Poirier.

> "We are proud to say that we didn't so much negotiate an agreement with the Crees but we built this agreement together."

Poirier also said that hiring Freddie Mianscum as the company's Mecheshoo Agreement Implementation Officer this year is another success. Mianscum came to Stornoway with 13 years of experience at the Troilus mine.

The goal with Mianscum's hiring was not only ensure that the Impact Benefit Agreement was properly carried out but that he could act as Stornoway's ambassador within the community. Poirier said Mianscum has done well because he knows "everybody" in Mistissini and Chibougamau.

With the groundwork laid for construction to begin on the mine, Poirier anticipates an employment boom. The mine start-up planned for 2016 is expected to create 482 permanent jobs.

These are positions that will last between 20 and 30 years and Stornoway expects to be in the region for much longer.

Many of these jobs will require a variety of professional training programs. Stornoway has set up a joint Training and Employment Committee to work closely with local and regional institutions (like the Cree School Board and the Cree Human Resources Development) to maximize Cree employment.

The mine will need graduates from the Ore Extraction program, and heavy machinery operators and mechanics will be in high demand.

"The CSB and CHRD are well aware of our employment needs and we have collaborated with them to be sure that at the appropriate time they will be initiating these programs.

"We have two CHRD employees on our Training and Employment Committee and we have provided a list of what kinds of qualified employees we need as well as the timing for them," said Poirier.

CREE HOCKEY NEWS & NOTES

Ice champs

Pucks and controversy drop in Cree hockey and broomball tourney

by Daniel Coyle

Former Detroit Red Wing Norm Maracle takes home the hardware in Class B1

Class B1 MVP Jordan Masty

Ceremonial Puck Drop at the 33rd Annual CREE Senior Hockey & Broomball Tourney

The CREE Senior Hockey & Broomball Tourney is opened with a prayer

Victory Lap

Whapmagoostui Tomahawks - Class B1 Champions

Over $70,000 in prize money was up for grabs as the 33rd annual CREE Senior Hockey and Broomball Tournament got underway December 5 at the Air Creebec Centre in Val d'Or. Once again, the four-day event attracted thousands of Crees who travelled by car, bus and plane to take in the action.

As in past years, games were not only held in Val d'Or but also at Centre sportif André-Dubé (CSAD) in nearby Senneterre. The tourney featured 76 teams competing in seven categories, including four Men's hockey categories: Class A, Class B1, Class B2 and Old Timers; and three Women's categories: Women's Broomball and Recreational Broomball, and Women's Hockey.

Grand Chief Matthew Coon-Come welcomed players and fans at the tourney's opening ceremonies, where he was joined by Val d'Or mayor Pierre Corbeil and former NHL enforcer Gino Odjick, who joined the Cree chiefs on the ice for the tournament's official opening prayer.

The highlights of the tournament were Men's Class A and Class B1 Hockey.

Twelve teams participated in Men's Class A Hockey, aligned in two divisions. Division CRA was dominated by two Amos-based teams: Amos Beaucoq and Amos Bar Chez Frid. Both clubs compiled perfect 3-0 records in the opening round, but Amos Beaucoq secured the top seed in the playoff round after scoring 16 goals and notching a +11 differential in the opening round.

The Waskaganish Renegades were tops in the Town of Val d'Or Division during the opening round, posting a 2-0-1 record, while allowing just two goals. The Waswanipi Chiefs finished 2-1, good for the fourth seed, while the Algonquin Raging Bulls, Mistissini Trappers, Eastmain Snipers and Chisasibi Hunters rounded out the playoff seeds.

The seventh-seed Mistissini Trappers started slow in the opening round, dropping a 4-1 decision to the Waskaganish Wings. But the Trappers got better as the tourney progressed, skating to a scoreless tie with the Wemindji Wolves before dominating Val d'Or KL in a 4-1 victory, earning them a quarter-final match-up against the undefeated Renegades. The Trappers were unfazed by the Renegades, who had won their division with a 10-0 rout of the Ouje Thunder Wolves, knocking off Waskaganish, 3-1. The Trappers rode that momentum into the semi-final, upsetting top-seeded Amos Beaucoq, again by a 3-1 score, earning a spot in the Class A final.

Amos Bar Chez Frid, 2011 Class A Champions, arrived at this year's tournament looking to redeem themselves after being eliminated in the quarter-finals a year ago. They got off to a hot start, dominating Val d'Or KL in the opening game, shutting out the locals 5-0. Chez Frid allowed only three goals against in the opening round, all of them in their second opening round game versus the Waskaganish Wings, eking out a slim 4-3 victory, before skating to a 5-0 romp over the Wolves to close out the opening round and lock up the third seed.

Things were not so easy for Amos in their quarter-final game against Eastmain, as they hung on for a 2-1 win before shutting down the Raging Bulls 5-0, setting the stage for a final against Mistissini, with $15,000 in prize money on the line.

Chez Frid were just too much for the Trappers to handle in the final as Amos posted their fourth shutout of the tourney, 4-0, to take home their second championship banner in three years.

The win created controversy, as many fans in attendance voiced their displeasure with what they felt was poor officiating that favoured Amos. While many of the concerns about officiating may be valid, it is difficult to deny that Amos Bar Chez Frid iced an outstanding hockey team at this year's tournament, as they do every year, and demonstrated a level of sportsmanship that matches their level of play.

The win has also sparked fierce debate among Cree hockey fans as to the role of imports in general, and the participation of teams from the Val d'Or and Amos communities in future tournaments. The online discussion was animated, with many fans urging tournament organizers to return to an all-First Nations format. Others emphasized the importance of having local teams participate as a way to build bridges between the Cree Nation and southern communities.

Following the tournament, Waskaganish Recreation Director Charles J. Hester invited Cree hockey fans to express their opinion on the import issue via an online survey on Facebook. Results of the survey were not available at press time, but this issue promises to be a hot topic in the months leading up to the 2014 event.

Men's Class B1 Hockey proved to be extremely popular at this year's tournament, as 14 First Nations teams battled for bragging rights. The end of the opening round saw the top two seeds held by a pair of Waswanipi squads, the Drummers and the Under Dogs, both of whom posted 3-0 records. The Drummers earned top seed with a goal differential of 13, one better than the Under Dogs. The Lac Simon Beavers and Whapmagoostui Tomahawks were both 2-0-1 in the first round, earning them third and fourth seedings, respectively.

Class B1 Hockey Champion Whapmagoostui Tomahawks, backstopped by former NHL goaltender Norm Maracle

The Drummers continued their dominance in the quarter-final, thumping the Kitcisakik Hawks 11-1, before squeaking by the Nemaska Axeman in the semi by a score of 2-1. Meanwhile, the Tomahawks were getting great goaltending from guy who once played for a team you may have heard of – the Detroit Red Wings. Norm Maracle, who also tended net for the Atlanta Thrashers, shut the door on the Chisasibi Juniors in the quarter-final, leading the Tomahawks to a 2-0 win. Whapmagoostui followed that up with a 4-1 win over Lac Simon in the semis, vaulting the Tomahawks into a showdown with the Drummers for the championship banner.

Many felt that the Class B1 final was the highlight of the tournament. Nothing was decided in regulation as the Drummers and Tomahawks skated to a 2-2 tie after three periods. This final was going to be settled in overtime. Fittingly, a young man who has already shown community leadership ended up leading his team to victory. Jordan Masty, a 20-year-old from Whapmagoostui, netted a highlight reel goal in OT to win it for the Tomahawks. Earlier this year, Masty joined the original seven young Cree activists on their incredible Journey of Nishiyuu, carrying the staff on their months long walk to Parliament Hill in Ottawa, inspiring young people across Canada in the process.

In other tournament action, the Val d'Or Old Timers dominated the Men's Class B2 category, going undefeated in the opening round, scoring an incredible 28 goals in three games. They then cruised to the category championship, knocking off the Lac Simon Penguins 5-1 in the final. It was an impressive tournament by Val d'Or, who outscored their opponents 17-2 in three playoff games.

Twelve teams participated in Women's Broomball, as the Waskaganish Starlites again lived up to their reputation as one of Eeyou Istchee's elite teams, going undefeated in six games in the tourney, outscoring opponents by a combined 22-3.

In Women's Recreational Broomball, the Lac Simon Lakers ran the table, winning each of their five games, the first three by shutout, to lead the way. But it was a pair of Kitcisakik Ladies players who led the way in scoring, as Charlene Pien scored five times and Kathleen Penosaway led the tourney with four assists.

The final in Women's Hockey came down to a battle between a pair of undefeated teams as the Val d'Or V Power defeated the Kitigan Zibi Wheels by a score of 4-2 to claim the championship banner for the second straight year.

"GUY HEBERT'S USUAL COMMENT IS THAT THE LAW IS ON THEIR SIDE. WE DISAGREE. **STRATECO SEEMS TO BELIEVE THAT BECAUSE THEY'VE SPENT MONEY, THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO BUILD A MINE.**"

Jessica Orkin, Sack Goldblatt Mitchell

A tenuous claim?

Grand Council lawyer not impressed by Strateco's latest ploy in the Matoush project

by Jesse Staniforth

Strateco Resources has filed suit against the Quebec government in an attempt to overturn its November 7 decision to refuse Strateco's application for uranium exploration in Mistissini territory, citing Cree opposition to the project. The lawsuit, filed December 5, also demands that the court grant the company authorization to proceed with the project.

Strateco CEO Guy Hébert told *the Globe and Mail* he believes the law is on the company's side. "This is public land," he said. "We have the right in Quebec to mine uranium."

Lawyer Jessica Orkin, of the Toronto firm Sack Goldblatt Mitchell, represents the Grand Council of the Crees. She said Strateco is fighting losing battle and doesn't expect much will come of it.

"It's a pretty tenuous claim that they're making," said Orkin. "Guy Hébert's usual comment is that the law is on their side. We disagree. Strateco seems to believe that because they've spent money, they have a right to build a mine."

Strateco spokespersons frequently repeat the claim the company has already invested $125 million in the Matoush project. But Orkin said investment does not confer rights. "That isn't how development works in Eeyou Istchee, in light of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the treaty rights of the Crees, and the treaty relationship between the Crees and Quebec," she said.

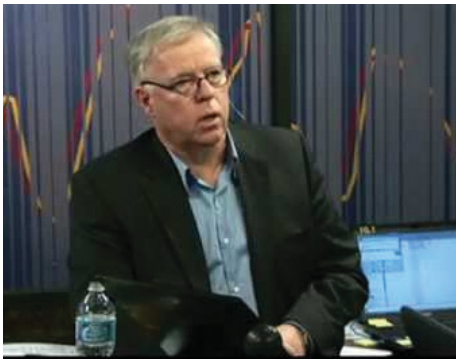
Orkin argued that Blanchet's decision "was a lawful exercise at his discretion," made in accordance with the JBNQA, with consideration for the Cree opposition to the project and Cree concerns about the environmental risks of uranium mining.

It is a mistake, added Orkin, to imagine that the issue is only about exploration, rather than uranium mining as a whole.

"Strateco has tried at every stage to only focus on its exploration project, saying, 'We only have to look at the risks of the exploration project because there'll be another study before we build a mine.' That begs the question: at what point do we look at the risks of a mine? If Strateco's position at every stage is, 'We've spent so much money, you can't stop us now,' then why should we permit them to spend more money before we assess whether a mine is going to be allowed in the territory?"

Strateco's challenge, said Orkin, is serious, noting that the company's lawyers have funnelled a lot of time and trouble into their arguments, and the judge to whom it is submitted will have to consider it very carefully.

But Orkin said Strateco's odds of success in court are "very, very tenuous, at best."



Strateco CEO Guy Hébert

While it isn't unusual for a company to challenge a government decision, Orkin said, courts generally tend to support decisions made by elected officials.

"Strateco has to face that deference – just as a basic principle," said Orkin. "But Strateco's asking to go a bit further, because they're not just saying they want to overturn the minister's decision and have him make a new decision – they're actually asking the court to step into the shoes of the minister and force the minister to approve the project. They're trying to take away the minister's decision-making authority. If you take it as rare that a decision gets overturned, it is exceptionally rare that in overturning a decision, the court will say, 'We're not going to let the minister try again to make a proper decision.'"

A RESOURCE MINE

Patrice Morin

Age 50, Val-d'Or, Chief Analyst

"As Chief Analyst, I am responsible for the Éléonore laboratory and for managing the team that works there. Thanks to our strong work relationships, we have been able to carry out several highly complex projects. I enjoy working toward the implementation of a laboratory with cutting edge technology in a safe and structured work environment."

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Bridging cultural chasms

Batshaw to work with Native women's shelter to improve care for Aboriginal children

by Jesse Staniforth

For many Aboriginal people, the name "Batshaw Youth and Family Services" conjures feelings of dread, brought about by the huge number of Aboriginal children in youth protection and foster care. However, an agreement between Batshaw and the Montreal Native Women's Shelter (MNWS) establishes a new relationship between the youth protection organization and Aboriginal communities.

MNWS director Nakuset called the agreement historic. "It's almost like a reversal of what the government did taking all the kids away in the Sixties Scoop. This is going to strengthen the bonds between the mother and the child," she said.

The Collaborative Agreement is intended to provide culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal children and families. Batshaw benefits from the cultural support services of a network of Aboriginal organizations.

This is critical, Nakuset said, to helping provide Aboriginal children the tools to feel they are a part of their culture: to embrace it and to be proud of themselves as Aboriginal peoples.

According to a CTV News report, as much as a third of the 300 English-speaking children in foster care on the island of Montreal are of Aboriginal ancestry – even though this group forms only 0.5% of the city's population. For many Native families, the experience of dealing with foster care has been profoundly negative. But Nakuset said the MNWS is committed to changing that.

She recalled an encounter with a very pregnant woman several months ago in the MNWS kitchen, during which she asked the woman whether she was expecting a boy or girl and got only the sad and quiet response, "A boy."

"I found out later on that this woman already has a couple of children who are in foster care," Nakuset explained. "And when you have children who are already in foster care, Batshaw is waiting at the hospital when you give birth, and they will take that child. They see that you've had issues before, and they just assume that you'll have issues again. So that's what they do to a lot of women. And then the women are broken: so this is not a woman who's happy to be pregnant and embracing it. This is not a good thing: 'I know I'm going to be pregnant for only X amount more days, and then they're going to take my child.'"

The new agreement is designed to improve this kind of situation, Nakuset said.

As a follow-up to the agreement, Nakuset said Batshaw would soon begin referring to MNWS pregnant women, mothers who have recently given birth and those who already have kids in care. These women will stay at the shelter, where they'll have access to a family care worker and, if needed, an addictions counsellor. After a proper assessment, the shelter will work with Batshaw to develop a healing plan.

"Batshaw gives the stamp of approval and that woman can stay here with her child," said Nakuset. "She can have her baby and come back to the shelter and stay here until she can find a home."

After finding her own home, the mother will remain in contact with Batshaw's services, as well as with an outreach worker from the shelter. "She'll be supported by a team to make sure she's able to keep this child in a good way, and to give her the tools to be a mother," Nakuset said.

A number of children and families currently being monitored by Batshaw are still living at home, where they are visited regularly by a social worker. The difference, she explained, is that now the social worker will be fully informed of available Aboriginal services and expertise to bridge cultural gaps.

MNWS director Nakuset

Additionally, the MNWS and Batshaw are working to create a program similar to Big Brothers and Big Sisters. The program would pair kids in the youth-protection system with an older Aboriginal mentor to help guide them, take them to cultural events, speak their language and provide them a positive role model.

Though Nakuset acknowledged that the agreement won't fix everything between Batshaw and Aboriginal children and families – noting that the organization has hundreds of staff and many different umbrella organizations – she said it's still a huge step forward, bound to benefit both Batshaw and the children in their care.

"It's the beginning of something: a better collaboration that's going to help the kids."

Carving out an enduring legacy

Celebrating Sam Bosum's life-long involvement in mining

by Akiva Levitas

Former Ouje-Bougamou Chief Sam Bosum receiving a prize at the Gala evening of the QMEA Convention

Former Oujé-Bougoumou Chief Sam Bosum may have been honoured as the Aboriginal Developer Award of the year for his decades of work in the mining industry, but he has no intention to rest on his laurels.

For nearly 50 years, Bosum has worked with mining companies in the region providing line-cutting and geophysical services. His experience and expertise is highly regarded in the industry, which honoured his career during the Quebec Mining Exploration Convention in Quebec City in November.

And he's not ready to retire. "I can say I have never really seen a Cree Elder retiring," Bosum observed. "Cree Elders don't really know what retirement is and for myself I'm looking ahead to try to keep the work going and continue training young people."

Bosum's first jobs were in exploration near Chibougamau. "I took mining exploration because I had dropped out of school very early and exploration work was available in the 1960s," Bosum recalled. "My dad worked as a labourer and I worked alongside him. He was the one who taught me how to start line-cutting at an early age."

Later, through his role as director of several mining exploration companies, Bosum was a major employer for the Cree of Oujé-Bougoumou, making him a prime candidate for the Aboriginal Developer Award. "I've attended many of these mining conferences, but I never thought that one day I would win the award until I received a letter informing me that there was an award for me at this year's conference," he acknowledged.

Although mining work played an important role in his life, Bosum's main focus is his community of Oujé-Bougoumou, where he was elected Deputy Chief in 1986. In 2001 he won election as chief, a position he held for eight years. He is still a member of the band council. "For 37 years, I've worked in the community as Deputy Chief, Chief and councillor," Bosum said, "When I was Chief though, I had someone who worked with me to help in the business because I didn't have much time to handle all of that work."

For Bosum the mining award serves as way to inspire the youth of his community. Although he has made a career in mining, Bosum encourages youth to continue their education and achieve the goals they set for themselves.

Bosum plans to continue his work training youth in mining exploration when they return for summer vacation. "There are a few youth who are interested in working in the bush," Bosum said. "I am still hoping that the youth would finish their training or finish up school. The Cree Nation needs trained Cree geologists."

"I can say I have never really seen a Cree Elder retiring. Cree Elders don't really know what retirement is and for myself I'm looking ahead to try to keep the work going and continue training young people."

As the industry evolves with new surveying technologies and responds to a changing regulatory environment, Bosum feels it is more important than ever that Cree youth participate in the region's rapid economic growth. Ultimately, Crees will be able to fill a growing number of skilled and managerial roles, helping create a stronger and more self-sufficient Cree Nation.

cree@large

by ndiamon

His face and image is known throughout the world. Probably even better known than Miley Cyrus's twerky mug. He is more beloved than Nelson Mandela and Elvis Presley combined. Yes, he has a slight weight problem but that hasn't appeared to affect his health in all his many years. His rosy cheeks and nose suggest he might also have a slight problem with the bottle.

He's a world traveller, an expert sled driver and an expert shot with the leather whip. He also has a supernatural ability to sneak into people's home undetected, gulp down countless glasses of milk and untold numbers of cookies in a single night. He's also known by several names – Kris Kringle, Father Christmas and Saint Nicholas, but he's best known in this part of the world as Santa Claus, or Sandigloss in Cree.

Cree@large caught up with the jolly fellow in red as he cracked his whip, scaring the bejeebus out of his elves slaving away in his North Pole sweatshop toy factory. Unfortunately, Santa refused to have his photo taken. He's getting grouchy in his old age!

Birthplace: The North Pole
Home: Children's hearts, The Workshop
Hair: I'm actually bald so this is a wig.
Height: 5'7 – without my boots, I'm five feet.
Weight: 175 lbs
Eyes: Sparkly
Occupation: CEO of Santa's Shop
Nickname: Kris Kringle, I have so many. Ho, ho, ho. And Sparky.
Person you admire the most: The head elf
Words or phrase you like hearing: Good heavens! A new toy!
Happiest moment: When the first flake of snow hits the ground
Most treasured possession: My studded leather whip. For the reindeer, of course
Dream job: This one
Greatest accomplishment: Getting Mrs. Claus to move to the North Pole
Recurring dream: Rudolph's navigation software goes haywire from a computer virus
Childhood ambition: Jet fighter
Word most used to describe you: That's obvious, jolly
Your idea of misery: A blizzard on Christmas Eve
Last book read: The Zen of Sleigh Maintenance
Historical figure you would like to meet: Charles Dickens
Weaknesses: Milk and cookies
Preferred way to spend an evening: Mrs. Claus on my lap
New Year's Resolution: Check my naughty or nice list THREE times! And to drop a few pounds. I am, after all, a role model.
Most embarrassing moment: Going down the wrong chimney and ending up in a sewer
Person you love the most: Mrs. Claus
Greatest fear: An elf union, affiliated with the Teamsters
Deepest secret: I dye my hair white
First kiss: Yo mama! LOL!
Scariest moment: When Cree hunters tried to harvest Donner and Blitzen
Longest you've gone without sleep: Stupid question. 24 hours!
Motto: Always have a Merry Christmas
Best friend: You
Word that describes you best: Fat and jolly
Song you want played at your funeral: For He's a Jolly Good Fellow!
Best pickup line you've used: Wanna play with my toys?
Title of your autobiography: Santa; One Man's Journeys
Funniest person you know: Will Ferrell
Kindest person you know: God
First car: A late model German sleigh made by Mercedes, baby
Best advice you ever heard: Don't be naughty
Weirdest dream: Being whipped by reindeer
Most likely to get coal in his stocking this year: Rob Ford
The last time you cried: When I listened to Little Drummer Boy in Cree
Favourite line from a song: Pa ra pa pum pum
Worst name you've called anyone: Ho
Porn Name: The Northern Pole
What would be your greatest misfortune? Global warming
Favourite sound: My runners over freshly fallen snow.
Favourite cuisine: Nouveau Borealis. Mrs. Claus' innovation
Favourite subject in school: Shop.
Favourite movie villain: The Grinch

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

DIRECTOR GENERAL
OF THE CREE NATION OF MISTISSINI

The Cree Nation of Mistissini is seeking to fill the position of Director General who, under the direction of the Chief and Council, will assume operational responsibility for the planning, organization, management, budgeting and control of all departments and resources under their control. The position also assumes a responsibility for developing ways and means to implement the specific priorities and mandates of Council to ensure progressive organization development in addition to sound government. This is a position of significant responsibility in the provision of high quality service to a community of 3,600 through a staff of 300 while providing strategic leadership and participation in furthering the political, economic, social and environmental vision of the Cree Nation of Mistissini.

This position will be of interest to experienced and accomplished administrative leaders with at least a Bachelor's Degree in a related discipline combined with a depth of knowledge of Cree governance, negotiated agreements and cultural practices.

Critical competencies for success in this role include teamwork, diplomacy, financial skills, strategic thinking, leadership, performance management and fluency in at least Cree and English.

Salary and benefits will commensurate with the level of responsibility. A full job description is available on the website of the Cree Nation of Mistissini, **www.mistissini.ca**

Interested candidates should forward their résumés by January 14, 2014 to:
Kimberly S. Coon, Director of Human Resources
Cree Nation of Mistissini
187 Main Street, Mistissini, QC, G0W 1C0

Please send résumés accompanied by a letter written in English outlining your motivation for seeking this position and commenting on the particular strengths that you feel you can bring to the role.

Informal, confidential enquiries may be made by contacting:
Chief Richard Shecapio at chief@mistissini.ca

UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

Merry Christmas Mother Earth

by Xavier Kataquapit

In the 1970s and 1980s, environmental and conservation concerns were hot-button election issues. The media made environmental and conservation stories a priority. As a child at school, I remember learning about air and land pollution, the negative effects of big industry and urban development on waterways, clear cutting of our forests and the destruction of wildlife habitats. Many of us schoolchildren saw people like David Suzuki as our hero. He and many other Canadian scientists were standing up for the environment with the message that we all wanted to leave Mother Earth as a better place for future generations.

This focus on ecological issues became a threat to huge corporations that prefer reaping windfall profits from publicly owned resources with as few regulatory impediments as possible. All of a sudden they were being forced to deal with government restrictions on harmful industrial practices.

Over the past 20 years, however, things have changed for the worse. Now governments and industry refer to environmentalists as terrorists. Massive amounts of money are spent to drown out the voices of the people who are trying to protect our air, water, land and wildlife. Years-long PR campaigns are conducted to discredit environmentalists and scientists such as my hero Suzuki.

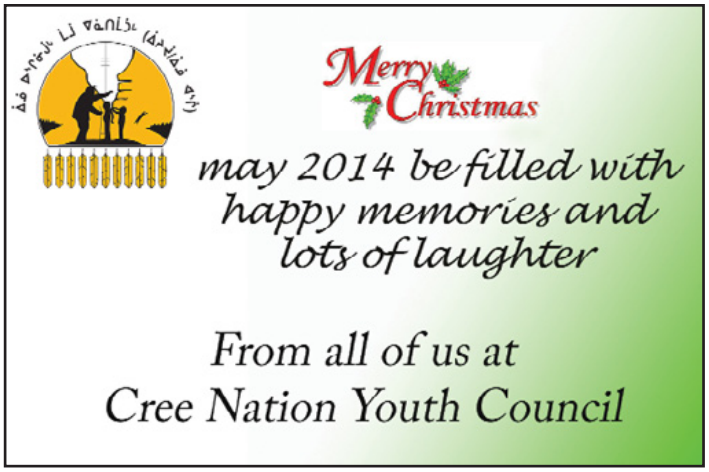
It is sad to think that money is viewed as more important than the air we breathe, the water we drink and the land we live upon. As in many other countries, Indigenous people are now the last line of defense for the wilderness, along with dwindling allied groups of environmentalists, against the sustained attacks of government and industry. First Nations across Canada are very active in a last-ditch stand against industrial projects and policies that are deadly for our air, water, land and wildlife.

It can be argued that First Nation people are also reaping the benefits of resource-extraction developments on our traditional lands. But my people are generally very concerned about developments and policies that threaten the health of our environment. Many of us still live very close to the land and our ultimate survival depends on a healthy natural environment.

But governments are eliminated legal protections of our lands and waterways. Government is also muzzling or cutting scientific research that could alarm the public about corporate developments. Industry and government are shamelessly working hand-in-hand to remove anything that might stand in the way of short-term profits.

I am not saying that we should always oppose industry and economic growth. But we have to make changes in a way that provides our children and their children with a safe and positive world to live in. I am very proud of our First Nation leaders and organizations that put a lot of effort and expertise into lobbying and working with government and industry to maintain environmental standards. It gives me hope for Mother Earth when I see our First Nation people across Canada and environmentalists join together to fight for a better world. Go to www.davidsuzuki.org for more information.

Christmas is a time of giving, sharing and renewal. Like the birth of a child over 2000 years ago and the celebration of the winter equinox from the dawn of civilization, we need to be reminded that we as people are good and noble. We need to remember that power and money cannot deter us from making this world a better place. Merry Christmas.



CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meetings in Mistissini: Alcoholics Anonymous, Tuesday's Hope Meeting, are at 7PM at the Mamou-Wechidodow Building Amisk Street. **Alanon Meetings** are on Tuesdays as well at 7PM at the Mamou-Wechidodow Building Amisk Street. **Alateen Meetings** are on Mondays at 3:30PM at the Reception Centre 282 Main Street. These meetings are all open meetings.

TD Scholarships for Community Leadership - Apply today! Applications available at Your high school or CEGEP (in Quebec) Online at www.td.com/scholarship or Call 1-800-308-8306 TTY (Text telephone) 1-800-361-1180

Cultural Manual for Foster and Adoptive parents of Aboriginal Children, launched at the last Gathering of the NETWORK on October 3... CHECK IT OUT! www.reseaumtl-network.com/eng/Portals/5/Cultural%20Manual.pdf

The Aviva Community Fund is Canada's longest running online community competition. With over $2.5 million dollars given away to date, the Aviva Community Fund is making a difference in communities across the country. Submit your idea for positive change and have a chance at sharing in this year's $1 million Aviva Community Fund.

For more info go to http://www.avivacommunityfund.org/

Kid's Help Phone Line:
1-800-668-6868
(www.kidshelpphone.ca)

Youth Helpline: 1-800-263-2266 (www.teljeunes.com)

Parents' Helpline: 1-800-361-5085
(www.parenthelpline.ca)

Missing Children's Network: They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared.
514-843-4333
(www.enfant-retourquebec.ca)

Drug Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626
(www.drogue-aidereference.qc.ca)

Gambling Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626
(www.info-reference.qc.ca)

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence:
1-800-363-9010
(www.sosviolenceconjugale.com)

Health and Sexuality Resources Center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) (www.criss.org)

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688
(www.nwsm.info)

Suicide Action Québec:
1-866-277-3553
(www.suicide-quebec.net)

Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources

Concordia University, Montreal:

The Centre for Native Education has changed its name to the Aboriginal Student Resource Centre (ASRC). The new name is inclusive of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis students the centre serves and recognizes its role as a resource for the Concordia community. For any further details contact: aboriginalcentre@concordia.ca or 514-848-2424 ext. 7327.

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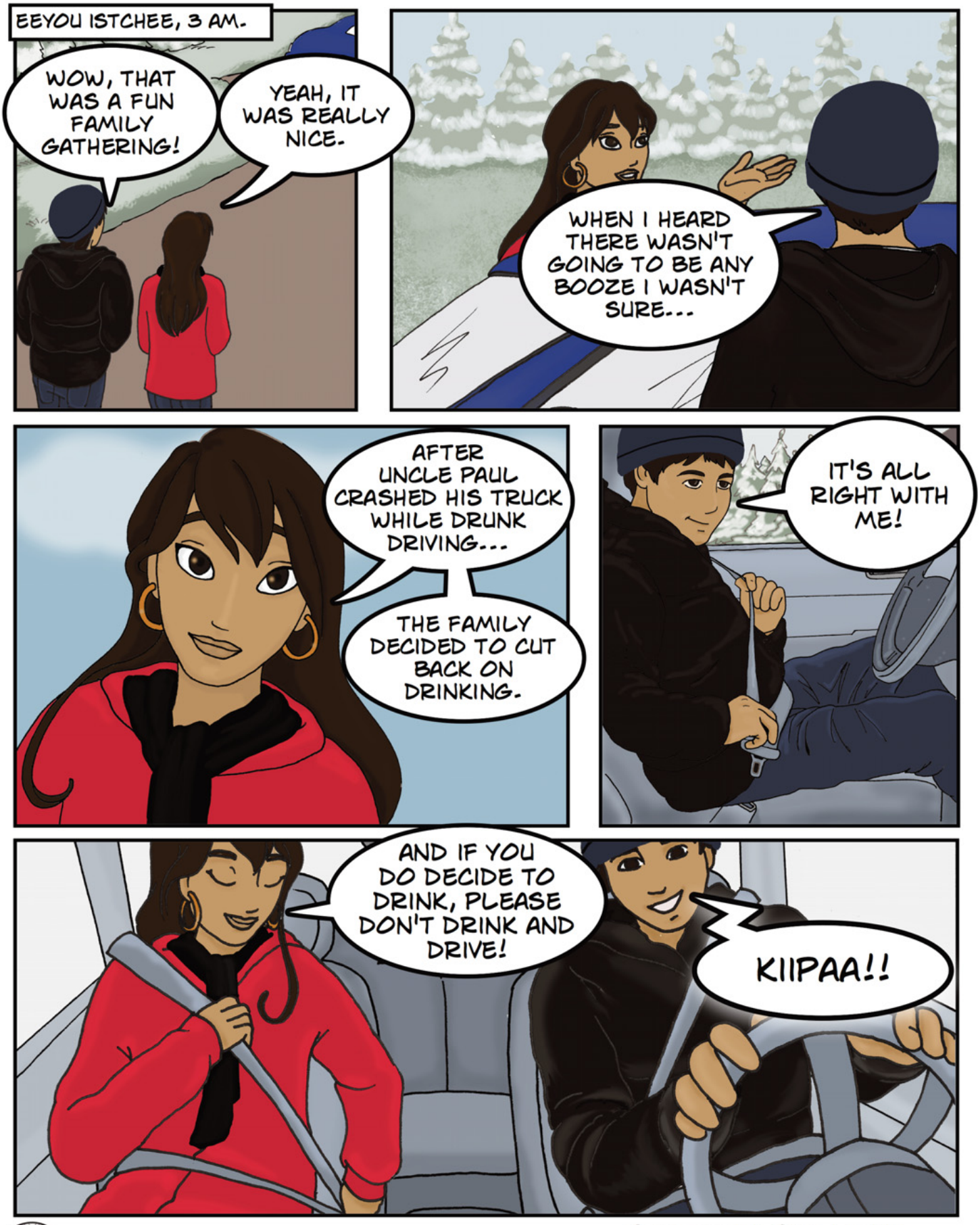
EEYOU ISTCHEE, 3 AM.
WOW, THAT WAS A FUN FAMILY GATHERING!
YEAH, IT WAS REALLY NICE.
WHEN I HEARD THERE WASN'T GOING TO BE ANY BOOZE I WASN'T SURE...
AFTER UNCLE PAUL CRASHED HIS TRUCK WHILE DRUNK DRIVING...
THE FAMILY DECIDED TO CUT BACK ON DRINKING.
IT'S ALL RIGHT WITH ME!
AND IF YOU DO DECIDE TO DRINK, PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!
KIIPAA!!

The Cree Health Board wishes you a safe and happy holiday season!

Connect with Cree Health:

/creehealth @creehealth

www.creehealth.org

On behalf of all the staff of Air Creebec Inc.
we would like to wish everyone a
Happy New Year 2014!

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ᑲ ᐅᖕᑭᐱᐳᓂᔨᐣ 2014!

airCreebec

For reservations, charters or information, contact:
Toll-free 1-800-567-6567
www.aircreebec.ca